

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 ARA-10 AID-05 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-07

FRB-01 INR-07 NSAE-00 RSC-01 TRSE-00 XMB-04 OPIC-06

SP-02 CIEP-02 LAB-04 SIL-01 OMB-01 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02

L-02 NSC-05 PA-02 PRS-01 SS-15 USIA-15 CEA-01 STR-04

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FM AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5322

UNCLAS OTTAWA 0018

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ETRD, ESTC, CU, CA

SUBJECT: CANADIAN-CUBAN TRADE: POSSIBLE IBM TYPEWRITER SALE

REF: OTTAWA 0016

1. EMBASSY UNDERSTANDS FROM REPORTER WHO ATTENDED GILLESPIE PRESS CONFERENCE CALLED TO ANSWER QUESTIONS ON IBM CASE (SEE LAST PARA REFTEL) THAT GILLESPIE DREW CLEAR DISTINCTION BETWEEN IBM AND LITTON CASES AND GAVE IMPRESSION OF TRYING TO DOWNPLAY IBM CASE. GILLESPIE REPORTEDLY SAID PROPOSED TYPEWRITER SALE INVOLVES 7,000 MACHINES, THAT CUBA HAS MADE STATEMENT OF INTEREST IN PURCHASE, THAT IBM HAS NOT CONTACTED EITHER CUBA OR USG BUT HAS BEEN DISCUSSING MATTER WITH IT&C, AND THAT IBM IS CONCERNED ABOUT PATENT PROTECTION AND SERVICING QUESTIONS. ASKED WHETHER IT IS NOT ODD THAT COMPANY WITH ONLY ONE NON-CANADIAN ON BOARD SHOULD HAVE TO SEEK USG APPROVAL, GILLESPIE AGREED IT IS ODD BUT IN RESPONSE TO FURTHER QUESTION WHETHER FIRM SHOULD ACT WITHOUT APPROVAL HE SAID ONLY THAT CANADIAN
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SUBSIDIARIES SHOULD ACT IN THEIR OWN BEST INTERESTS.

2. ASKED HOW SERIOUS MATTER WAS, GILLESPIE REPORTEDLY SAID IT WAS ONE OF LONG SERIES OF IRRITANTS AND THAT HE CONSIDERED IT A SERIOUS MATTER BUT NOT A CRISIS. IN RESPONSE TO SUGGESTION THAT THIS MIGHT BE "CUBAN PLOY", GILLESPIE SAID HE DID NOT THINK SO BUT IF SO "CANADA IS NOT PREPARED TO PLAY THE GAME." ONE REPORTER ASKED WHY TRANSACTION SHOULD NOT BE CARRIED OUT ON GOVERNMENT-TO-GOVERNMENT BASIS. GILLESPIE COMMENTED THAT THIS IS THINKING PRETTY FAR DOWN THE LINE.

3. UNRELATED TO THIS PRESS CONFERENCE, TORONTO STAR OF JANUARY 3 REPORTS THAT GILLEPIE HAS EXPRESSED HOPE THAT LEGISLATION TO PREVENT CANADIAN TRADE FROM BEING GOVERNED BY AMERICAN LAW WILL BE THROUGH HOUSE OF COMMONS "IN A MATTER OF WEEKS." STAR QUOTES GILLESPIE: "BUT I WOULDN'T WANT TO SUGGEST THAT EVEN WHEN THE AMENDMENT IN QUESTION BECOMES LAW THE IRRITANT WILL GO AWAY BECAUSE THEN THERE WILL BE A CLASH OF TWO LAWS - THE CANADIAN AND THE AMERICAN. I THINK IT WILL BE EASIER TO SORT OUT WHEN THE U.S. ADMINISTRATION IS IMPRESSED BY THE FACT THAT THE CANADIAN PARLIAMENT HAS ACTED ON THE QUESTION." PORTER

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